

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 begins with the protagonist reflecting on her lavish wedding to Don at the iconic Beverly Hills Hotel, attended by three hundred guests, mostly Hollywood elites. The wedding is orchestrated almost entirely by Don's parents, Mary and Roger Adler, with little input from the couple themselves. The protagonist wears a breathtaking jewel-necked taffeta gown, designed by Vivian Worley, the head costumer at Sunset Studios, embellished with rose-point lace and long sleeves. Her hair is elegantly styled by Gwendolyn into a simple yet flawless bun, with a delicate tulle veil completing the look. While the wedding is a public spectacle controlled by others, the protagonist feels a deep sense of commitment as she exchanges vows with Don, a man she believes to understand her better than anyone else.

After the wedding, as the couple is basking in the celebration, Harry pulls the protagonist aside to check on her emotional state. Despite the overwhelming excitement of the wedding and the glamour of being Hollywood's newest golden couple, Harry asks if she is truly happy with Don. The protagonist, feeling like the center of attention, reassures him that she is fine, believing with her youthful optimism that Don is indeed her happy ending. At just nineteen, she feels she has found someone who sees her, and with his reassuring presence, she feels a sense of completion. However, as Harry continues to speak to her, a hint of discomfort arises, and she curiously asks why he has never made any romantic advances toward her, despite the close friendship they've shared for years.

Harry, always a charming and likable man, deflects her question with humor, offering to kiss her on the cheek if she desires. The protagonist, in her slightly tipsy state, pushes further, wondering if she's been giving off signals that she wanted more from their friendship. Harry, though clearly avoiding the topic, explains that he simply doesn't see her that way, despite her being a stunning woman. The protagonist is

taken aback by his response, but she remains composed, not entirely sure how to process his admission. The conversation marks a turning point for her, as she grapples with the realization that the relationships in her life often come with certain expectations—some unspoken and some deeply rooted in the dynamics of Hollywood.

As the protagonist looks over at Don, swaying with his mother on the dance floor, her mind drifts to the growing sense of unease in their marriage. Don is seven years older than her, and despite their passionate connection, she begins to feel the weight of their differences. Don, a successful actor with a legacy to uphold, is determined to rise above his parents' shadow and prove himself as a major star. Meanwhile, the protagonist is trying to navigate her own desires for success while balancing the public persona of being a wife in a famous marriage. The differences in their ambitions, as well as Don's complex relationship with fame, start to create an undercurrent of tension in their otherwise perfect life.

Harry's admission, that he's never been attracted to her, leads the protagonist to reflect on her role in her own relationships. She realizes that, just like with Don, she has always played a part to meet certain expectations, whether those are romantic, professional, or personal. Her image in the eyes of others, particularly in Hollywood, has been carefully cultivated and constructed. The protagonist begins to feel the weight of constantly performing for the camera, even in her most personal relationships. The conversation with Harry reveals her inner conflict, as she struggles to separate who she is from who others expect her to be. Despite the glamorous wedding and her belief that she's found her "happy ending," she starts to question whether she can ever truly escape the roles imposed on her by society, fame, and the expectations of those around her.

As Harry and the protagonist continue their conversation, the tension is palpable. The protagonist, still processing the reality of her marriage and her complex relationships with the men in her life, realizes that the road to happiness might not be as simple as it once seemed. She wants to believe in the ideal of love, but she's beginning to understand that love, like fame, comes with its own set of rules, compromises, and

challenges. Harry's rejection, though gentle, serves as a reminder that even in the most glamorous and idealized relationships, there are limits. The protagonist, despite the facade of perfection, feels more lost than ever, caught between the desire to please others and the need to preserve her own sense of identity. The narrative captures the tension between public admiration and personal fulfillment, as the protagonist grapples with the complexities of love, fame, and self-discovery in an industry that values appearances above all else.

